

Handbook for Parents 2023-2024



WELCOME TO THE FERNCUMBE FAMILY

Dear Parent/Carer

This booklet has been compiled by teachers, parents and governors to give you useful information about our school. We really hope that the beginning of your child's formal education at The Ferncumbe will mark the start of *your* long and happy association with our 'Ferncumbe Family'.

We encourage close partnership with parents. Over a long career in education we are convinced that one of the most important factors in ensuring pupils achieve well and develop as confident life-long learners, is the quality of the home-school partnership. There is pressure on everyone's time these days, but your children's years at primary school are *so* special, and can be a defining time for *you all*, as you establish lasting friendships and community spirit. Do try to get actively involved in supporting school in some way. You might volunteer to be a regular helper* in the classroom, forest school or to accompany children on school trips. Parents Associations make a *huge* difference to the life of any school, so I would urge you to support the events of the 'Friends' or, better still, become a member of the committee. You may have special skills or talents, or useful business links, that we could call on from time to time. Children are always proud to see their parents being involved in school life!

We provide an enriched and varied curriculum in which your child will be encouraged to develop and achieve. But education is a *process*, not limited to academic knowledge and attainment. Children are learning for all of their time in school – how to play, how to behave and how to develop positive relationships with other children and adults. We encourage everyone in our school to have a positive, optimistic outlook on life – both in school and in the wider community.

We hope that you find this booklet useful and would welcome your comments if you feel it could be improved. Please read it carefully and keep it safe. Some pages will be updated when necessary.

Should you require further information or wish to make an appointment to discuss a school related issue please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to help.

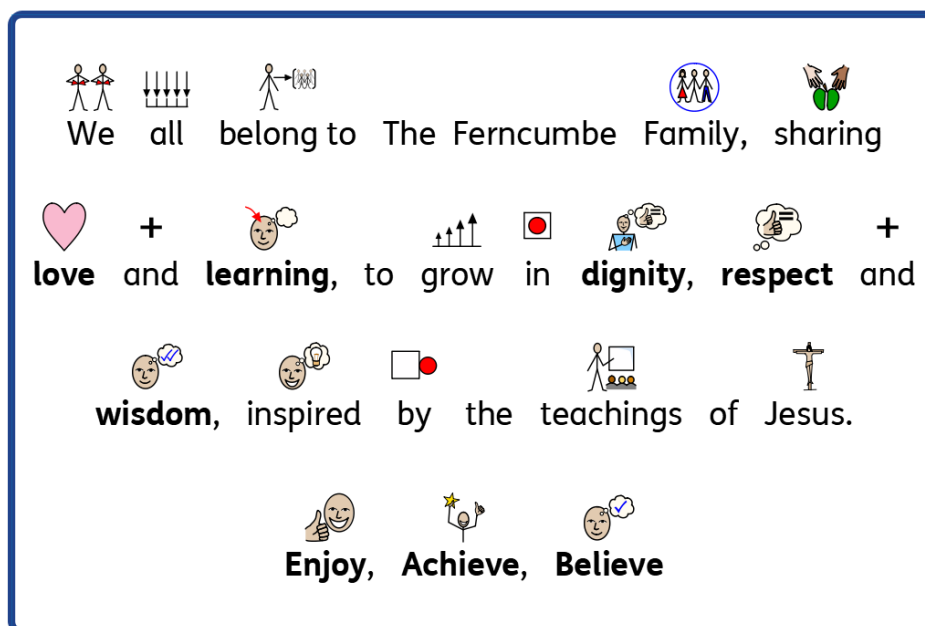
Sally Morris, Executive Headteacher
Tracey Webb, Head of School

*Regular volunteers have to be cleared by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Our School Vision

Our Christian vision has been developed with governors, staff, children and parents and sits at the heart of all that we do and any decisions we make. The children learn and discuss the school vision statement regularly so they have a growing understanding of our values and how they are lived out within school and the wider community.

Our School Vision Statement



I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of. John 10:10

The School Day

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| 8.30 am | Playground gates unlocked for children to come into school |
| 8.45 am | Playground gate locked and start of school day |
| 8.55 am | Official close of registration period |
| 11.45 – 1.15 pm | Lunch Time is staggered |
| 3.00 pm | Playground gates unlocked. |
| 3.15pm | End of school day |

Children who arrive after the close of registration are recorded as ‘unauthorised absence’ for the whole morning. This is the law, not a school rule. They then need to be signed in by a member of staff, and the time of arrival recorded.

In cases where the *buses* are late, we do not record that as ‘late’ on children’s individual records, as this seems to be very unfair. We do however keep a separate log and draw it to the attention of officers of the Local Authority and the School Transport Service



Please ensure that your child arrives in time to start at 8.45. Children have 'Early Morning Activities' to start as soon as they enter the classroom. Those who arrive late get off to a bad start, immediately needing to 'catch up' and can disturb others who are already settled. We never blame children for being late as it is the parents' responsibility to ensure children are in school on time.

Please collect children promptly at 3.15. Reception and Key stage 1 children are brought to the playground by a member of staff. Key stage 2 are supervised out into the playground. Bus children are accompanied to the bus by their teachers.

Children are **not allowed** to use the Play Trail or Tyre Park at the end of the school day, this includes younger siblings.

Attendance

Regular attendance is one of the keys to a happy and successful time at school. It is amazing what we get through in a day or week. A child who misses odd days often feels left out and confused. Our average attendance rate at Ferncumbe is very good – well above the County average.

If your child is away from school we would be grateful if you could let us know immediately. The school office is manned from 8.30 am. For security reasons, we phone home to find out where any absent child is, if we have had no notification. Please help us in keeping the records accurate by ringing every day of absence to let us know why. If a child is going to miss time because of a medical or dental appointment (please try and make them in the holiday or outside of school time) then please let us know in advance. Please provide a copy of the appointment card/letter to the School Office if possible.

The School Policy concerning illness is set out below. This follows the guidance of the Health Protection Agency.

| | |
|---|--|
| Symptoms of Respiratory infection, including Covid-19 | Children and young people who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people, where they can. They may return to school if they no longer have a high temperature and are well enough to attend. |
| Diarrhoea and/or vomiting | 48 hours from last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting |
| Chickenpox | Until all vesicles have crusted over |
| Impetigo | Until lesions are crusted and healed or 48 hours after commencing antibiotic treatment |
| German Measles | 6 days from onset of rash |
| Measles | 4 days from onset of rash |
| Flu | Until recovered |

We ask all parents for their co-operation in minimising cross infection.

Taking children out of school in term time for holidays is disruptive to their learning and is strongly discouraged. Any requests must be made in writing. Please note that permission may only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Should your child's attendance level become a concern, we will expect you to work with us to improve it.

Uniform and Equipment



We believe that children work better and have more of a sense of belonging if they are in uniform and ask for your support in this. Parents certainly find uniform easier than endless daily arguments about what is going to be worn. We have tried to keep the uniform simple and items can be purchased from many sources. The sweatshirts, cardigans and coat with The Ferncumbe logo on can be ordered via the website www.brigade.uk.com. **If your child attends school in an incomplete uniform they will be lent uniform for the duration of that day.**

| School Uniform | |
|---|---|
| Dark Grey School: trousers/shorts/skirt/pinafore dress or culottes | |
| The Ferncumbe sweatshirt or cardigan | |
| White polo shirt | |
| Burgundy Ferncumbe Elite Storm Jacket with Logo (optional) | |
| *suitable black shoes or boots | |
| Art Apron (optional) | |
| PE Kit | |
| Plain white T-shirt, black shorts, Pumps/Trainers. A black track suit for winter games is needed. | |
| Forest School Kit (as requested) | |
| Autumn/ Winter | Summer |
| Long trousers Long sleeved top 2 pairs of thick socks Woolly hat & Gloves Walking boots/ wellington boots Fleece | Long trousers Long sleeved top Sun hat Walking boots/ wellington boots |

*Shoes and boots

School shoes should be black, sensible and comfortable for the safety of all. We like children to be *active* at playtimes. They are not allowed on the tyre park or on the adventure playground unless they have footwear with a good grip. Shoes with ‘high heels’ are not allowed. In winter, children are allowed to wear black boots.

Water bottles

A named plastic container/ water bottle **MUST** be provided from home, otherwise children do not have access to a drink. Children are discouraged from drinking during lesson time but have full access during breaktime and lunchtime.

Hats, Sun lotion

Children should have a sun hat in school during hot weather for protection at playtime and lunchtime. Parents are encouraged to apply “all day” sun tan lotion to their children prior to arrival at school. Staff are unable to apply sun lotion to children during the school day.

Jewellery & Make up

For safety reasons the only items of jewellery allowed in school are small stud earrings. These must be removed or taped over for PE and Swimming. Nail polish is not allowed.

Please make sure that all clothing and equipment is clearly marked with the child's name.

Mobile Phones

Children are not allowed to have mobile phones in school.

Assessment

Children are continually assessed during their time at school, through a variety of formal and informal methods, to ensure that work is sufficiently well targeted at a child's abilities. These are not 'tests' in the old-fashioned sense and are not revised for.

Statutory Assessments

Early Years Foundation Stage

(4/5 year olds)

As each child starts school they are assessed in the form of the Foundation Early Years profile, this takes place over their first year in school. The process begins within the first six weeks of the child's school life and this forms the baseline from which teachers gain information about the skills that the child brings to school and acts as a starting point for teachers to plan the child's next learning steps. Throughout the year the children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals and progress is assessed using 2Simple software.

Key Stage 1

(5/6/7 year olds)

In June of Year 1 pupils have a phonics screening check. This requires decoding 40 real and nonsense words. If pupils are unsuccessful they are retested at the end of year 2.

Key Stage 2

(7/8/9/10/11 year olds)

In June of Year 4 pupils have multiplication tables check. The purpose of this is to determine whether pupils can recall their times tables fluently, which is essential for future success in mathematics. It is an on-screen check consisting of 25 times table questions with 6 seconds to answer each question.

In the final term of primary school, Year 6 pupils take statutory assessments in Reading, Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling and Mathematics (KS2 SATs).

Children in Year 1-6 are assessed against end of year expectations for their year group. Your child will be judged at the end of the academic year as either working towards, meeting or working at greater depth within the expected standard for their age.

This is detailed more fully in our Assessment Policy which is available for parents to see.

The Curriculum

We follow the National Curriculum for England & Wales, which is statutory for all maintained schools. The curriculum is more fully described on the DofE's website, but includes:

English; Mathematics; Science; Computing; P.E. (including swimming); Art and Design; History; Geography; Music; Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship (PSHE & C); and Design Technology. We teach Religious Education in accordance with Warwickshire's Locally Agreed Syllabus. FL (Foreign Languages) is taught from Year 3 to Year 6, but all classes learn to communicate using words from many languages.

We aim to provide a broad, balanced curriculum which promotes visual and expressive arts and sports. We believe that a thematic cross-curricular approach endows learning with more relevance – and fun!

Reporting to Parents

There are three formal occasions in the year when parents can meet their child's teacher. These meetings are in the autumn, spring and summer terms. In addition to these meetings, each child has a progress book which is sent home with recent assessment results and, in the summer, a written report.

We hold review meetings for pupils with identified special needs. Parents are always invited to these meetings, which are sometimes attended by other professionals working in school e.g. speech therapists, physiotherapists, educational psychologists.

School Office

The school office is open every day from 8.30 am until 3.30 pm.

You can contact school by telephone, email, or call into the office first thing in the morning when you drop your child off. They will be able to provide information and assistance on a range of items such as; admissions, school meals, holiday forms, bus passes, permission slips, absences and up-dating pupil contact details. A telephone message machine will operate if no members of staff are available to take a call or if it is out of school hours.

Money

We operate a cashless system using School Gateway App . Details on how to register will be given to you once your child has started with us.

Food, Drinks & School Meals

Please note – **We are a Nut Free School.** All pupils in Reception, Year 1 and 2 are entitled to receive a universal free school meal. For Key stage 2 (years 3,4,5 & 6) the cost of a school meal from September 2023 is £2.50. Payments are made in advance for each half term period via the online system.

Children have the choice of bringing their own healthy packed lunch or eating a school lunch. Changes to these arrangements may only be made at the end of each half term. A copy of the lunch menu is displayed on the Notice Board in the Hall weekly, in classrooms and links are sent to parents via email

We are fortunate to work in partnership with EduCaterers to provide a production kitchen, whereby the majority of food produced and served to our children is prepared on site, using fresh ingredients.

The Lunch Menus are monitored termly, and amendments made as necessary. We are able to cater for a variety of dietary requests such as vegetarian or no dairy. To discuss special diet requirements again, contact the school office.

Drink is provided for children who have school lunches but others should bring their own. We provide a water cooler for drinks during the day. **A named plastic container/ water bottle MUST be provided from home and regularly washed please!** We ask that children do not bring 'fizzy' carbonated drinks into school. If children have a drinks container in their school lunchbox, they still need a water bottle for classroom and playground use.

We do not allow children to share food in the dining hall and we ask them to take uneaten food and rubbish home. This allows you to see what they have eaten and pack the right amount of food. It also saves us money on rubbish disposal.

Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM)

All Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils in state-funded schools are automatically entitled to a free school meal.

Free School Meals

Whatever age your child is (and including Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 registration groups) if you receive one of the qualifying benefits we strongly recommend that you register for FSMs online using the link below:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/education-learning/apply-free-school-meals?categoryId=20008&documentId=170>.

This will mean your child's school does not miss out on important (Pupil Premium) funding. It may also mean your child will continue to receive free meals after the end of Year 2 (and for as long as you continue to receive the qualifying benefits).

Packed lunches for eligible children can be provided when we go on trips. Information will be provided with trip letters.

Healthy Eating - Snacks

The children up to Year 2 are each provided with a free piece of fruit daily at break-time. For year 3 and above, please send a snack into school from home, we request that it should be a piece of fruit and not crisps/sugary snack. We are proud that our playground is a litter free zone.

Birthday Celebrations

We have a number of children with food allergies so if it is your child's birthday, and you would like to celebrate with the class we encourage parents to donate a book for the class to share. This has proved very popular with the children and is, of course, a lasting gift.

Voluntary Contributions

From time to time the children take part in educational visits which incur transport and entrance fees. We use a coach which transports children to the swimming baths. In common with other maintained schools we have to recoup these costs by asking parents for a voluntary contribution, but no child would be excluded from an activity, or in any way discriminated against, because a contribution is not forthcoming.

The nature of the school budget means, that if these activities cannot be financed through contributions they cannot take place so we hope that all parents are willing to pay for these very worthwhile activities. We do our very best to keep costs to a minimum.

If however, anyone has genuine difficulty in meeting a contribution please see the Headteacher. It goes without saying that all such approaches will be met with the strictest confidence. For further information see our *Charging Policy* on the school website.

Communication between Home and School

It is **vital** that we have daytime contact numbers to get in touch with you in the event of any emergency involving your child, or in the event of us needing to send all children home because school needs to close for any unforeseen reason. Mobile numbers are not helpful if the phone is switched off or onto the answer message. **Do remember to let us know if you change your place of employment or your 'phone numbers.**

Please check the school website regularly (especially the interactive calendar on the home page) as this is a constantly updated source of information and is where we you will find school dates and events.

Texting and emailing service

We use School Gateway App as a school email communication service. You will need to download the app 'Gateway', this is a very quick and easy process to get set up, a flyer will be available in your school information pack. For this communication service to work it is essential we have an up to date mobile phone number and email address for each family. If you need to contact the school please either call or email the school office. Text Service will only be used in emergency's otherwise all communication is via email only.

Twitter-feed

Each class will have their own twitter feed to keep parents up to date with the exciting learning in school. Please search the classroom name @ Ferncumbe.

School dates and events

Notices of events happening in school and within the community are to be found on the interactive calendar on the home page of our school website. Fortnightly school newsletters are published on the school website.

Please check your child's book bag regularly. It is important to respond promptly to any requests.

Policies and Documents

Many of our policies and a variety of government documents are available in school and relevant ones are on the school website www.ferncumbefamily.co.uk. Should you wish to read these at any time please contact the school office.

Insurance

The Local Authority does not provide personal accident insurance for pupils in its schools. If you wish you may acquire your own personal accident insurance. The Authority is insured against legal liability to pupils if they are injured accidentally due to the negligence of the Authority or its employees.

Access during the school day

During the day, the front door of Wren House/School Office is the only entrance to use, if you need to collect your child. It is important that the children arrive promptly for the start of the school day before

the playground gates are locked. If they do arrive late, please bring them to the office so that the register can be corrected.

Consent Forms

Local Visit Consent Forms - This allows us to take the children, properly supervised, on trips around the village, to church, to Forest School etc.

Permission will also be required for any educational visit further afield, parents will be notified of trips. Without consent, either in the form written consent via email or School Gateway Consent, we will be unable to take your child on any visits.

Photography Consent Forms – This allows your child to be photographed for School photographs, press photography, newsletters, Twitter etc.

Internet Permission Form – For use of the school website.

Inclusion

We follow the Special Educational Needs (SEND) Code of Practice. This ensures more specialised support for children who need it. Our SENCo, Victoria Irvine, coordinates this support. There is a governor with responsibility for SEN. Both are contactable via the school office.

Child Protection

In common with all schools in Warwickshire we operate under the agreed Child Protection procedures. This is an inter-agency agreement and provides us with clear guidance and protocol. The named teacher for Child Protection issues is the Heather Reid, and Tracey Webb deputises in her absence. In some circumstances, if we are seriously concerned about the safety or welfare of a pupil, we have a duty to contact social services.

We seek to work in productive partnership with parents and will support as much as we can when there are problems or difficulties. Please let us know.

‘Under the Education Act 2002 (Section 175 for maintained schools), schools must make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Parents/carers should know that the law (Children Act 1989) requires all school staff to pass on information which gives rise to a concern about a child’s welfare, including risk from neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse. Staff will seek, in general, to discuss any concerns with the parent/carer and discuss the need to make a referral to Children’s Social Care if that is considered necessary. This will only be done where such discussion will not place the child at increased risk of significant harm or cause undue delay. The school will seek advice from Children’s Social Care when they have reasonable cause to suspect a child may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Occasionally, concerns are passed on which are later found to be unfounded. Parents/carers will appreciate that the school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead carries out their responsibilities in accordance with the law and acts in the best interests of all children.’

Restorative Practice

We use a restorative approach at Ferncumbe, to help children understand the impact of their behaviour choices and to build a strong sense of community. Our leaflet will help you to understand some of the things your child may want to come home and talk to you about. The leaflet is included within your school admission pack and is also available from the school office. If you require further guidance please contact Heather Reid via the office.

Protective Behaviours Taking Care Project

To further safeguard our children, they are taught annually about protective behaviours. This is a national programme to help prevent abuse and harm.

There are two main themes:

- We all have the right to feel safe all of the time
- We can talk with someone about anything, even if it is awful or small.

Parents/carers will receive additional guidance on how to support and reinforce protective behaviours to help keep children safe.

After School Care

We have a very popular before and after school club, called 'Wren's Nest', which operates from every morning from 8.00am to 6pm Monday to Thursdays and on Friday until 5.15 pm For more details please contact the school office.

Complaints

As in any family, problems may arise from time to time. The procedure is as follows. Initial approaches and enquiries should be made to your child's teacher. If this does not prove successful please contact the Head of School.

In the unlikely event that the issue cannot be resolved please put your concerns in writing to the Chair of Governors, Donna Bothamley email – chair3210@welearn365.com who will take up the concern.

Family Information Service

Which is part of Warwickshire County Council can give advice or 'signpost' useful services for families. They can be contacted at:

-
- fis@warwickshire.gov.uk
 - [Twitter – @WarksFIS](#)
 - [Facebook – Warwickshire Family Information Service](#)

Phone: 01926 74227